

Protecting Children by Strengthening Families. That's what Franklin County Children Services is all about. In 2007, the agency made a difference in the lives of 28,441 children and their families in many ways. Each day, through the dedication of more than 700 employees, 400 foster families, 200 adoptive families, and 600 volunteers and mentors, Franklin County Children Services makes a positive impact to keep children safe and families strong.

Investigating child abuse and neglect and protecting children from its effects are at the core of Children Services' mission. Helping parents cope with problems and change behaviors so they can provide a safe home for their children is equally important. And most times, parents have the capacity to protect and care for their children with the help of services and community support.

In addition, Children Services helps relatives who care for children in their family, finds foster homes for children who need to live away from family on a temporary basis while problems are being resolved, and places children in loving adoptive homes when they will never be able to be safely returned to parents. Franklin County Children Services operates a 24-hour hotline at (614) 229-7000 to report child abuse and neglect.

The year 2007 brought many changes to Franklin County Children Services. Eric Fenner began his tenure as executive director of the agency. He met with dozens of community leaders, increased appreciation and wellness opportunities for Children Services staff, and refocused some of the agency's goals. The successes of the agency under his leadership are found throughout this annual report to the community.

Implementation of the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) brought many challenges as the agency's computerized data management, tracking and reporting systems required complete conversion. Transition to the new system is still in process.

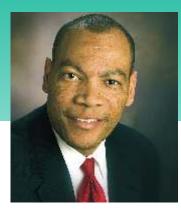
Prevention services are now integrated throughout the entire life of a family's case with Children Services, and more family support services were added in 2007. These changes should help the agency better serve families and meet federal outcome goals.

Finally, the agency introduced a new website. The colorful, streamlined Internet site is easy to navigate and has many new features. These include brochures and publications that can be downloaded, a calendar of events, donor opportunities, recent news releases, an upgraded employment page, and valuable information about agency programs. The new website can be accessed at www.franklincountyohio.gov/children_services.









The year 2007 marked a time of transition for Franklin County Children Services. It began with a new executive director, and a belief that by focusing on strengthening families, we truly enhance our ability to protect children. A belief that by working collaboratively with community providers, we can link families to the critical services they require to overcome the life challenges with which they are faced. A belief that the role of Franklin County Children Services must be more facilitator, leader and partner with the community, as opposed to the perception of separator of children from their families. At the end of 2007, we saw the meter move. We experienced 10-year lows in the number of children in paid care, 10-year lows in the number of children on our caseloads and 12-year lows in the number of children in our custody.

Our agency has shifted its focus from All Kids Count (although they do, and the safety of children will always be at the core of our existence) to a focus on Protecting Children by Strengthening Families. We believe that children are best protected when we take advantage of the protective capacities that exist within families to ensure that every child is safe. We believe that by investing in community-based services and working with our community partner agencies, we can link families to quality services in their own communities and thereby reduce the need for separating children from their families.

We attribute our success to the hard work of our staff, both our direct service and support staff who have made a commitment to Protecting Children by Strengthening Families. We have also "strengthened our front door" with contracts for services that are responsive to the needs of our families. These contract agencies provide quick linkage and engage our families in a timely manner to reduce stress and guide our parents/guardians to become more effective in their parenting skills.

We have also been challenged. The transition to the new Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System has proven more difficult than anticipated. Working to preserve families is exhausting and requires patience and clear communication with all systems and service providers.

We hope you will enjoy our annual report for 2007, highlighting our accomplishments, financial statements and service statistics. I would welcome your feedback, questions and suggestions for improving our services as we continue the mission of Protecting Children by Strengthening Families. As always, thank you for your support.

Executive Director

Franklin County Children Services

CAPMIS, SACWIS and Alternative Response

BETTER WAYS TO EPKIDS SAFE

Significant Change in 2007

Improvements in child protection practice, a new computerized information system, and selection for an innovative pilot project for investigating child abuse and neglect brought about significant change for the agency in 2007.

The implementation of CAPMIS (Comprehensive Assessment and Planning Model Interim Solution) is meant to help Children Services workers better protect and care for children who may be unsafe, while avoiding intervention into lives of families where parents are able to protect their children. This model involves structured decision making by using tools to assess a child's safety, develop safety plans for children, and conduct family and reunification assessments. The CAPMIS model provides for consistent decision making from the time a child or family is referred to Children Services until the time a case is closed.

In July 2007, Children Services converted to SACWIS (the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System) and the agency is still working out issues and transitioning to the new computer system. When fully operational, SACWIS will allow for information on a child or family to be accessed by any county Children Services agency, which will help workers conducting investigations of abuse or neglect. All data will be entered in a consistent manner statewide, enabling aggregate data for each county to be analyzed for comparative purposes.

Late last year, Franklin County Children Services was selected as one of 10 Ohio counties to pilot a new approach to investigating child abuse and neglect. Recognizing the variation in the nature of child abuse and neglect allegations, the Alternative Response Pilot Project allows agencies to look at the needs of the child and offer services without a formal investigation that results in a disposition of substantiation that abuse or neglect has occurred. This assessment model will replace the current investigative model for some case referrals. In Franklin County, Children Services will designate certain units to use Alternative Response, while others will continue to investigate through the traditional model. Consideration of which response to use will be based on the severity of the allegations of abuse and neglect and the family's willingness to participate in services.

The Alternative Response Pilot Project was authorized by the Ohio General Assembly, and is a result of a joint effort by the Ohio Supreme Court and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. The goal of the pilot is to allow caseworkers to link families earlier with needed services. States using this approach have reported that families are less likely to experience a recurrence of child abuse and neglect. Ohio's 15-month project begins in mid-2008.

Through these three new initiatives, Franklin County Children Services believes it will be able to keep children safer, work more collaboratively with families, and attain more positive results.



Protecting Children by Strengthening Families

FAMILY ACHIEVEMENT



Battling substance abuse has been a long struggle for Angelina Edblom, and for her six children who have lived in foster care and with birth relatives. After losing custody of her children, Angelina realized the dire affects of drug abuse, and made a vow to change her life. And that's exactly what she did.

"I finally woke up and realized the hurt and pain my drug addiction was causing my children and my husband," said Angelina. "My children didn't ask to be put in this situation. They deserved better. They deserved a happy and healthy mother."

She has diligently completed all her case plan objectives, including family counseling and parenting classes. She was very consistent about visiting her children and those visits increased in frequency and length until three children – Jourdonna, 14; Oshey, 10; and Quaadir, 9 – were able to safely return home by the end of 2007.

Angelina has now been drug free for more than two years. She admits that it was a hard battle and at first, she was not working well with Children Services. But she has come full circle and understands what her case plan was trying to accomplish. "I am grateful to Children Services and my support team," said Angelina. "My kids and I wouldn't be where we are today with out their help."

Mom's Dedication Leads to Success

Angelina and her children are continuing to take part in counseling to address past and current issues, and are regular in participating with therapy at Children's Hospital. This has helped them communicate and work together in a positive way, and to enjoy each other as a family. She has regular visits with her three younger children and hopes that someday they will be able to return home.

Angelina and her children also remain connected with the previous foster families who had bonded well with the children. All these supports have been of great help...especially this past February when Angelina's husband tragically died.

Angelina continues to have a confidence in her abilities to remain free from substance abuse and to be a good and supportive mother to her children.

At the Child Abuse Prevention Breakfast, Franklin County Children Services recently honored Angelina and her family for overcoming many challenges and making great strides to strengthen their family.

Photos (Left to Right):

Angelina and her children Quaadir, Jourdonna and Oshey are happy to be together.

Children Services social worker Keisha Bowen and Angelina.

Angelina speaks at the Child Abuse Prevention Breakfast about what it means to be recognized with the agency's Family Achievement Award. Board member Gale King and Executive Director Eric Fenner congratulate Angelina on her accomplishments.

Strong Families Start as Loving Ones



She was at church when foster and adoptive parent Patricia Hendrix received the notion that she could make a difference in the lives of children in need. "During church one Sunday, I saw another church member who was a foster parent to a beautiful little girl. The child came up to me and asked, 'Will you be my mother?'" said Hendrix. She was so moved by the little girl's plea that it motivated her to find out more about fostering and adopting. "So here I am, five years later and I'm a foster parent; soon to be an adoptive parent."

Those were the sentiments expressed by Hendrix on November 14, 2007 – National Adoption Day – as she made Charity, 16, Chastity, 14, and Christian, 10, a permanent part of her family through adoption.

Adoption Day is celebrated across the country through the volunteer efforts of lawyers, foster care and adoption professionals, child advocates and local judges on one special day to finalize the adoptions of children. In 2007, Children Services partnered with Capital University Law School's National Center for Adoption Law and Policy, Nationwide Insurance, Wendy's, the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, and Franklin County Probate Court.

These collaborative efforts resulted in 12 families finalizing the adoption of 21 children, with an emphasis on sibling group adoptions. "In 2007, we had two sets of three sibling groups being adopted," said Children Services Adoption Director Kim Toler.

Helping make this day a reality for the Hendrix family was the special attention they received through the Wendy's Wonderful Kids (WWK) program. The WWK recruiter helped the family understand the benefits and rewards adoption could bring to the family. Wendy's Wonderful Kids, a signature program of the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, is committed to finding homes for the 114,000 waiting children in foster care across the United States.

Children Services was one of the pilot sites for the program in 2004 and now has two of the 109 recruiters throughout the U.S. and Canada. Since its inception, the agency's pilot program has yielded 27 adoptions and 46 matches.

The WWK recruiters are responsible for focusing 100 percent of their time finding permanent homes for children in foster care. Nationally, the program has had tremendous results with 370 finalized adoptions and 1,724 matches made as of December 2007.

There are more than 100 children under the care of Franklin County Children Services who want to be adopted, but continue to wait for families. Children Services is hopeful that ongoing recruitment efforts, designed to celebrate adoption, will highlight the need for older children and siblings to be adopted. The profile of adoptable children in Central Ohio consists of African-American children over the age of 5, Caucasian children over the age of 10, sibling groups who want to remain together, children with behavior challenges, and children with special needs. For information about adoption, call (614) 341-6060.

Photos (Left to Right):

Adoptive parent Patricia Hendrix (center) adopted Chastity, Christian and Charity on National Adoption Day.

The Hendrix family celebrates on Adoption Day. Franklin County Children Services adoption social worker Christine Cole, Patricia Hendrix, Chastity, Christian, Charity, and the children's biological grandmother Fanny Cornelius.

Jeffrey and Denise Chapman finalized their adoptions of David, 14, and Alan, 11 on Adoption Day.



YOUTH COUNCIL

A Voice to Help Improve the System



"Let's give youths in foster care a voice to help us improve the system." That was the thought Franklin County Children Services had in mind when the agency established a youth advisory council, Youth for Change, in 2007. The youth council is open to youths ages 15 to 21 who are currently in foster care, or those who have been. The agency interviewed interested youths in the spring of 2007 and started regular meetings with the council in the summer. A core group of five youths began meeting, planning events and recruiting others to join them. By year's end, 10 to 15 youths were attending meetings and giving their input.

They discuss foster care rules that can prevent them from going to sleepovers, getting a ride home from sports practices, or hanging out with friends. They talk about wanting to get a driver's license, like other teens. They give suggestions for making life better for themselves and other kids in care. But, most of all, they share common experiences that help them feel less different from others their age.

Participation in the Council offers the youths the opportunity to:

- interact with other youths and mentor younger children entering care,
- provide feedback to Children Services and those who work in the education and judicial systems,
- earn community service hours and have opportunities for social development, and
- gain leadership experience.

Two teens from the Youth for Change group were honored as Rising Up and Moving On winners by Children Services at its annual Child Abuse Prevention Breakfast. They are Tabitha Bowen and L'Oreal Calloway.

Despite attending five different high schools, Tabitha graduates in 2008 and will be the first in her family to attend college. She hopes to be a child psychologist. Tabitha has been student of the month and was chosen as outstanding mentee of the year by the Central Ohio Mentoring Center. She is a shining example for her five younger siblings, whom she tutors and encourages to believe in themselves.

L'Oreal has graduated from high school, is working and well on her way to independence. She is a mature older teen who keeps a positive outlook, although she has faced loss and separation from a young age. L'Oreal has been a strong member of the agency's Therapeutic Arts Program, and hopes to go to college in the future.

Both have visited Washington D.C. with a larger group of young people through the Emancipation Department's annual trip, and both were involved in planning a pregnancy prevention conference for youths that included a free concert by singer Kelly Price, and a keynote speech by Ohio State and Baltimore Ravens quarterback Troy Smith.

The opportunities for making things better for foster children and teens are endless for Youth for Change, and for Franklin County Children Services.

Youth For Change

Photos (Left to Right):

Tabitha Bowen spoke at the Child Abuse Prevention breakfast after receiving a Rising Up & Moving On award.

L'Oreal Calloway was congratulated on winning a Rising Up & Moving On award by Board member Brent Bishop and Executive Director Eric Fenner.

Agency youths traveled to Washington D.C.















all kids count







Protecting Children by Strengthening Families

- Child Abuse Investigations
- In-Home Family Services
- Foster Care
- Adoption
- Volunteers and Mentors









Our Community as a Family

In 2007, Children Services provided help for 28,441 children and their families through direct services by the agency's professional staff and by purchasing services from 51 provider agencies.



Safety, Placement, Permanency and Well-being

Services are aligned with the Children Services mission and with meeting federal goals in four areas, including safety, placement, permanency and well-being.

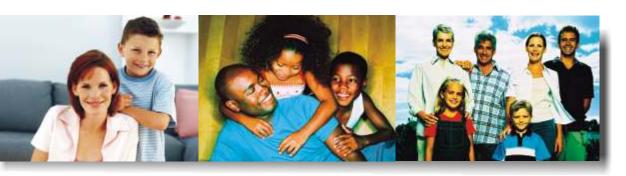
Safety

Protecting Children by Strengthening Families can best be accomplished by providing the level of services needed at every point of a family's interaction with Franklin County Children Services. Prevention services were formerly a separate category of services provided to children in the community and on Children Services' active caseload. In 2007, these services were integrated throughout the agency's lines of business. Prevention services are now designed to provide help to families and children to prevent case openings, to prevent placement of children on the open caseload, to prevent further maltreatment of children, and to prevent the recidivism of children who have returned home following placement. Franklin County Children Services believes that its mission can best be carried out by offering a variety of family support services to families at every stage of a case. No separate prevention statistics will be reported for 2007 and in the future.

Children Services Intake and Investigations staff provide protective services by investigating referrals of children who are alleged to be abused, neglected or dependent. These services are provided 24-hours a day. The agency also accepts referrals from the Franklin County Juvenile Court on youths who are unruly or delinquent.

When investigations indicate a need for ongoing services, a case is opened and sent to one of the agency's two regions or two managed care partner agencies. Children Services provides case management, protective and supportive services, and purchases services from community agencies within a case plan agreed to by the family and Children Services casework staff.

- 13,001 referrals received
- 11,507 family investigations completed
- ongoing services for 6,001 cases
- protective services for 17,223 individual family members
- family services to 3,114 children through managed care partnerships
- . 6,058 children were on the active caseload at the start of 2007, with 5,688 at year's end



Protecting Children by Strengthening Families

24-Hour Child Abuse Hotline: (614) 229-7000

Adoption & Foster Care: (614) 341-6060

Volunteers and Mentors: (614) 275-2690

Community Relations: (614) 275-2523

Placement

Every effort is made by Children Services to keep children with their families whenever safely possible. When out-of-home placement is necessary, the agency's goal is to place children in the least restrictive environment, to provide opportunities for and to facilitate regular visitation, and to reunite families as soon as can be safely accomplished.

Due to the transition to the statewide-automated child welfare information system in mid-2007, some data is not available to report on placement services. However, the following point-in-time data reflects the success that Children Services has had in the past year in keeping families together.

- 3,192 children were in agency custody at the start of 2007, with 2,779 at year's end
- 2,471 children were in paid care at the start of 2007, with 2,153 in placement at year's end
- · 363 children were in agency foster homes at the start of 2007, with 333 at year's end
- 1,549 children were in purchased foster care at the start of 2007, with 1,332 at year's end
- 559 children were in group or institutional care at the start of 2007, with 488 at year's end
- · 517 children were placed with relatives at the start of 2007, with 457 at year's end

Permanency

Children Services is committed to assuring a safe, permanent home for each child who cannot remain with or return to family.

- · 212 children's adoptions were finalized
- 351 older youths received emancipation or independent living services to enable them to make a transition from being cared for to being on their own
- 72 agency youths graduated from high school in 2007, with 46 starting college in the fall

Well-being

Children Services provides special opportunities and services to children and youths to enhance their well-being.

- 564 children and youths received volunteer or mentoring services from 605 volunteers or mentors
- 5,337 children received gifts through the Holiday Wish Program provided by 1,097 individuals and 372 groups
- 317 children and youths received services through the Therapeutic Arts Program
- 1,670 children received equipment and services through the state program of services to children with medical handicaps, of which Franklin County Children Services pays the county's share of these expenses



Report of Services 2007

INCOME



Local & Miscellaneous Funds (67.8%)

Federal Funds (28.7%)

State Revenue (3.5%)

operating rund balance as or January 1, 2001	Ψ+3,200,130
Operating Fund Balance as of January 1, 2007	\$45,260,156

Income (Cash Basis):

Local & Miscellaneous Funds	\$120,785,805
Property Taxes	\$117,037,956
Interfund Revenue	2,170,493
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families/PRC	931,069
Board & Care from Parents	374,927
Miscellaneous	271,361

Federal Funds	\$51,050,857
Title IV-E Placement (Administration)	3,687,237
Title IV-E ProtectOHIO Waiver	22,069,277
Title IV-E Administration	18,651,681
Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, VA Benefits	969,840
Title IV-B Part 1	804,898
Title IV-B Part 2 - ESSA (Emergency Services Supplemental Assistance)	983,303
Non-Recurring Adoption Subsidy	306,919
Independent Living Program	1,691,090
Miscellaneous Contract Payments	1,886,613

State Revenue	\$6,315,657
Regional Training	566,317
Foster Parent Education	158,475
Child Protective Allocation	4,680,132
Child Welfare Adoption Subsidy	752,660
Post Adoption Special Services Subsidy	158,073

Total 2007 Income	\$178,152,319
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Beginning Balance Plus 2007 Income	\$223,412,475

EXPENSES

Operating Expenditures (Cash Basis):

Safety Program	\$75,150,290
Intake & Investigations	\$11,246,652
Casework Protective Services	25,501,820
Care Partnerships	29,220,785
Purchased Supportive Services	5,941,219
Prevention Services	1,687,476
Homemaker Services	418,099
Homebased Services	563,948
Medical Services	565,771
Psychological Services	4,521

Placement Program	\$70,670,960
Family Care Services	7,149,000
Emergency Shelter Care	4,555,044
Foster Home Care	33,813,031
Group Home Care	5,905,174
Institutional Care	19.248.711

Permanency Program	\$21,959,007
Adoption Services	11,347,656
Legal Services	2,985,451
Child Enrichment Services	1,078,508
Emancipation Services	6,547,392

Total 2007 Operating Expenditures	\$167,780,257
Total 2001 operating Expenditures	Ψ101,100,201

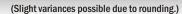
Operating Fund Balance as of December 31, 2007	\$55,632,217
operating rund balance as of beceniber 51, 2007	Ψ00,002,211

Ending Balance Plus 2007 Expenses	\$223,412,475
chang balance rius 2007 expenses	\$223,412,473

Safety (44.8%)

Placement (42.1%)

Permanency (13.1%)





Franklin County Children Services 2007 PURCHASED SERVICES

A Child's Waiting, LLC	\$10,849
Action for Children	5,905
Adoption Advocacy	6,000
Adriel School, Inc.	919,777
Advantage Adoption and Foster Care	1,967,941
Agape	12,068
Alliance Human Services, Inc.	304,454
Alps	17,322
Applewood Centers, Inc.	436,416
Bair Foundation	1,447,976
Beech Brook Spaulding	200,611
Bellefaire Jewish Children's Bureau	669,879
Berea Children's Home and Family Services	157,973
BHC Belmont Pines Hospital Inc.	11,352
BHC Fox Run Hospital	323,516
·	49,149
Big Brothers Big Sisters Association	,
Buckeye Ranch/Square One for Youth	6,498,998
Buckeye Ranch (Managed Care)	12,726,406
Caregivers Helper, Inc.	93,375
Catholic Social Services	136,420
Center for Child and Family Advocacy	75,572
Center for Child and Family Development	17,808
Center on Deafness	45,792
Central Community House	36,540
Chileda Institute Inc.	106,865
Christian Children's Home of Ohio	116,681
Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center	445,000
Columbus Health Department	101,559
Community Refugee & Immigration Services	15,661
CompDrug, Inc.	165,616
Consumer Support Services, Inc.	1,835,555
Cornell Abraxas Group, Inc.	96,863
Correctional Management Co. LLC	779,377
Crossroads Fort Wayne Children's Home	112,643
Directions for Ohio Youth, Inc.	98,823
Directions for Youth	796,883
Dungarvin Ohio, LLC	361,970
Eastway Corporation	303,394
Eckerd Youth Alternatives, Inc.	231,784
Fairfield Academy	109,350
Family and Youth Institute, Inc.	10,330
Family Connection, Inc.	57,596
Firstlink	525,051
Focus on Youth, Inc.	5,850
Franklin County Educational Services	420,000
George Junior Republic in Pennsylvania	146,589
Gladden Community House	101,313
Godman Guild	190,417
House of New Hope	604,305
Huckleberry House	53,265
Indiana Developmental Training Center	236,074

Jubilee Youth Center, Inc.	\$ 120,232
Keystone Richland Center, LLC	647,420
Legal Aid Society of Columbus	449,299
Life Start, Inc.	648,093
Lifeway for Youth	2,599,708
Lincoln Behavioral Health Care	914,250
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Maryhaven Inc.	753,226
Mentoring Center of Central Ohio	10,055
Neighborhood House, Inc.	255,920
Neurotherapy of Central Ohio	10,298
New Horizon Care Network, Inc.	22,545
New Horizon Youth Center, LLC	42,840
New Leaf, Inc.	1,693,120
North Side Child Development Center	74,811
Northwest Counseling Services	66,180
Nursefinders of Columbus	24,475
Oak Ridge Treatment Center Acquisition	69,440
Oasis Therapeutic Foster Care	722,706
Oesterlen Service for Youth	83,778
Ohio Hospital for Psychiatry	42,450
Ohio Youth Advocate Program	4,321,395
Ohio Youth Advocate (Managed Care)	16,494,379
Options Treatment Center	147,385
Parenthesis Family Advocate	1,827,740
Pomegranate Health Systems	1,533,995
Presbyterian Child Welfare Agency	100,343
Pressley Ridge	29,730
Preventive After Care, Inc.	617,145
Rosemont Center	,
	4,166,363
RTC of Columbus	2,316,332
Safe Landings, Inc.	848,135
Salesian Boys	30,000
Sojourners Care Network	41,030
South Side Settlement	52,070
Southeast, Inc.	7,359
Specialized Alternatives for Youth & Family	2,060,708
St. Joseph Orphanage	61,831
St. Stephen's Community House	280,806
St. Vincent Family Centers	37,406
Starr Commonwealth	3,250,708
Strategies Against Violence	6,436
Synergy Family Foster Care, Inc.	28,391
Syntaxis Youth Home	1,633,986
Transportation Resources, Inc.	4,310
Treatment Services LTD	37,515
United Methodist Children's Home	3,666,304
Viaguest Behavioral Health of Ohio	1,553,970
Village Network	3,477,517
Vision Family Support Services, Inc.	12,390
White Deer Run Inc.	245,840
Youth Advocate Services	954,161
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Subtotal \$93,297,705
Payment to Children Services
Foster and Adoptive Homes 10,447,710

Other Purchased Social Services

10,447,710 296,830

Total Purchased Social Services

\$104,042,245

BOARDS & COMMITTEES

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Franklin County Children Services Board

Rhonda Evans, *Chair*Joseph Mas, *Vice Chair*Joy Soll, *Secretary*Sara Chase
Brent Bishop
Marjorie Frazier

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Marilyn Gravely Cheryl Harger David Tiggett Gena Phillips Annette Scott

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Gena Phillips, *President*Marilyn Gravely, *Vice President*Amanda Scott, *Secretary*Carol Jones, *Treasurer*

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Cheryl Harger
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